

EXTERNAL ASPECTS OF MILITARY POLICY



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The European security system is undergoing dynamic changes. Its key participants — the UN, OSCE, NATO and the EU — are adapting to the new realities. There is no clarity with respect to the future role of Russia, which will continue to exert substantial influence on the process of forming and maintaining security on the continent.

Our country has three main options for building its future security — jointly with the West, whose security is guaranteed by NATO; jointly with the CIS Collective Security Organisation (that is, with Russia); or by remaining a non-aligned (neutral) state. These main options have their adherents and opponents, in line with their perception of Ukraine's interests in the security domain. This article presents an assessment of the mentioned options.

Which organisation should take the lead in maintaining regional security in Europe?

At present, NATO is the most effective military-political organisation within the European security system. Because it has preserved the military-political capacity accumulated during the Cold War and flexibly adapted to new conditions, NATO, when compared with the UN, OSCE and the EU, appears to be the only regional security institution that, according to the experts of George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies, “can effectively operate in all four rings of security” — individual security, collective security, collective defence and promoting stability (Table “The potential of security institutions”)¹.

The potential of security institutions

Institution	Ring 1: Individual Security	Ring 2: Collective Security	Ring 3: Collective Defence	Ring 4: Promoting Stability
UN	Yes?	Yes?	No	Yes?
OSCE	Yes?	Yes?	No	Yes?
EU	Yes	Yes	No	Yes?
NATO	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

In the near future (over the next 5-10 years) NATO will retain its lead role in maintaining regional stability in Europe. This conclusion is based on the U.S. readiness to invest significant funds into the defence sector and maintain close ties with Europe, regardless of anything, and the process of the Alliance enlargement. The approach of NATO to the borders of Ukraine as a result of the Alliance's enlargement will promote European security. This thought is shared by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine A. Zlenko: “This process [of NATO enlargement] will not pose a threat to Ukraine's national interests and is capable of bringing new guarantees of security”².

At the same time, the end of the Cold War and the trend towards greater interdependence of the European countries have objectively led to a decrease in the attention to the military. Although one cannot entirely rule out a possibility of a war in Europe, the present situation in the security domain is characterised by significant reduction of the probability of a large-scale military conflict. The continent is witnessing a shift in emphasis after the events of 11 September, 2001, from primarily military to law-enforcement and peacekeeping, i.e., a gradual “crossover” of the lead role and predominant influence in the field of regional security from the “military-political” NATO to the “anti-crisis” EU.

¹ Cohen R. and Mihalka M. Cooperative Security: New Horizons for International Order. — The Marshall Center Papers, No.3, 2001, p.1.

² Zlenko A. Speech at the NATO-Ukraine Symposium “The World in the 21st Century: Co-operation, Partnership, Dialogue”. — *Nauka i Oborona*, 2001, No.3, p.6.

In the middle and long run, the system of European security will undergo more significant reformation. The contours of this future system (sometimes called “Co-operative Security System”) will be determined not by the positions and capabilities of the alliances like NATO and the EU, which is the case now, but by the positions and capabilities of politico-economic centres — the USA and a united Europe, and possibly also Russia, in the event of its substantial progress in the direction of market reform and democracy building. Most probably, NATO will play the key role in formation of the future regional security system in Europe.

The chances of Ukraine joining NATO

Ukraine’s accession to NATO in the near future seems unrealistic. This is not a matter of Ukraine’s intentions but of its ability to ensure compliance with NATO membership criteria³, and the real economic capabilities of the state. If one compares the potential of Ukraine with that of the new NATO members (the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland), with roughly equal indicators of aggregate territory, population and armed forces strength, Ukraine’s lag by GDP level and defence expenditures is disastrous (Table “*Ratio of the general strategic indicators between Ukraine and the new members of NATO*”).

Ratio of the general strategic indicators between Ukraine and the new members of NATO*

Country	Territory, sq. km	Population, million	Armed Forces strength, ths.	GDP, in 2001, \$ billion	Defence expenditures, in 2001, \$ billion
Poland	312.683	38.7	178	191	3.4
Hungary	93.030	10.1	49	52	0.9
The Czech Republic	78.703	10.3	49	56	1.2
Total	484.416	59.1	276	299	5.5
Ukraine	603.700	49.0	310	35	0.7**
Ratio	0.8:1	1.2:1	0.8:1	9:1	8:1

* Sources: <http://www.countrywatch.com>; <http://www.nato.int>.

** To ensure correctness of comparison, Ukraine’s defence expenditures include the cost of military pensions, which is typical to NATO country practices.

At that, one should remember that the new members of the Alliance are consistently criticised regarding their compliance with NATO standards, in particular, for insufficient (!) defence expenditures.

Furthermore, there is the factor of Russia, which, despite its rapprochement with NATO, continues to maintain a negative attitude towards the Alliance’s expansion⁴. Russia’s positions in its dialogue with NATO are rather strong, as it is a nuclear power, a key participant of arms control regimes and a major supplier of energy resources to Europe. Formally, the level of Ukraine’s co-operation with NATO far exceeds the level of military co-operation with Russia — among

Ukraine’s last year’s gains observers mention nearly 600 joint events with NATO, against 52 Ukraine-Russia military co-operation events.

Meanwhile, in contrast to its relations with NATO, Ukraine maintains close military-technical co-operation with Russia. Ukraine is also strongly dependent on Russia in the energy and political spheres. Generally speaking, at present Russia is gradually consolidating its political and economic positions in Ukraine and diligently working for the extension of the term of stationing for Russia’s Black Sea Fleet in the Crimea, which does not improve Ukraine’s chances of joining NATO either.

It may be assumed that Ukraine’s accession to NATO is theoretically possible in 10-15 years. However, by that time, the Alliance itself will most probably have acquired a new substance, and entry criteria may also have changed significantly. Hence, it would be more correct to assess the prospects of Ukraine’s approach to Euro-Atlantic structures in general, or to the new European security system in general. **The most rational position of Ukraine with respect to NATO entry might be formulated as maximum proximity in the absence of formal accession.**

The chances of Ukraine joining the CIS Collective Security Organisation (the Tashkent Treaty)

For Ukraine, there is no point in joining the Tashkent Treaty. It will not offer anything beyond the present level of co-operation with CIS countries and Russia, but will significantly strengthen political dependence on the latter.

In fact, the CIS Collective Security Organisation is only formally a military alliance, since real co-operation within its borders centres not around common goals, values and commitments but primarily on a bilateral basis: Russia-Belarus, Russia-Armenia, Russia-Central Asia (and is shaped, first and foremost, by individual factors of the Treaty members’ dependence on Russia).

Furthermore, the prospects of the Tashkent Treaty itself will most probably be affected by the presence of a U.S. military contingent in Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kirgizstan) used for fighting the centres of terrorism in Afghanistan. This factor weakens the role of the Treaty in the maintenance of security and stability in Central Asia and prompts some member states (Kirgizstan and Tajikistan) to take independent decisions without formal consultations with Russia and other members of the Organisation (as required by the Treaty).

³ The criteria of a country’s readiness to join NATO include: the state of democratic civilian control of the military; transparency of defence planning and budgeting; provision of the principles of democracy, rule of law and human rights; ability to contribute to the Alliance’s security; settlement of territorial disputes with neighbours, etc. See: Study on NATO Enlargement, Chapter 1: Purposes and Principles of Enlargement. Sept. 1995, <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicctx/enl-9502.htm>.

⁴ See, e.g., the statement of the Secretary of Russia’s Security Council V.Rushailo that “consolidation of international efforts at fighting terrorism should not be used as an excuse for the plans of NATO expansion eastward”. — *ITAR-TASS*, November 8, 2001; or the statement of the Charge’ d’Affairs of the Russian Federation in Ukraine A.Sazonov: “Russia is negative about the process of NATO expansion eastward, sees no reason for this and does not understand the arguments cited in its support”. — *Interfax-Ukraine*, November 8, 2001.

Therefore, **Ukraine's accession to the Tashkent Treaty is inexpedient** — it already has extensive bilateral relations with Russia in the defence sector, and accession to the Treaty will not give Ukraine's security anything really new, with the exception of negative political consequences.

The prospects for non-aligned status

Ukraine will probably remain a non-aligned country for at least the next 10-15 years, until the contours of a new European security system are formed.

Joining NATO would correspond to the interests of our state but we are not ready for accession. Meanwhile, accession to the Tashkent Treaty or the Union of Russia and Belarus is possible but does not meet Ukraine's interests.

Ukraine's non-aligned status looks logical if one considers its specific geopolitical location and the relevant weakness of its foreign policy — Ukraine is trying to maintain friendly relations with both the West and the East simultaneously, even in the face of contradictions between them. What's more, Ukraine's populace is most supportive of formal neutrality.

According to the poll conducted by Sociological Service of Razumkov Centre⁵ (Diagram “Which form of relations with NATO corresponds to Ukraine's national

interests?”), among the various potential forms of Ukraine's relations with NATO, non-aligned (neutral) status best meets its national interests (although the number of adherents of this variant in 2001 was somewhat lower than in 2000 — 45.6% against 42.1%). The number of respondents who support Ukraine's accession to NATO fell considerably (almost two-fold — from 15.4% down to 8.8%). However, adherents of military integration with the East, i.e., of Ukraine joining the Tashkent Treaty, are not seen in numbers — 12.5%⁶.

Given the absence of a direct large-scale military threat, it may be stated that **in the long run, Ukraine's security depends not so much on its membership in military alliances as on the effectiveness of economic and democratic reforms domestically**. And the declared course of integration with EU may automatically strengthen guarantees for Ukraine's security in the event of its official recognition as a candidate for EU membership (as is the case with, say, the Baltic states) and Ukraine's active participation in the EU Common European Security and Defence Policy.

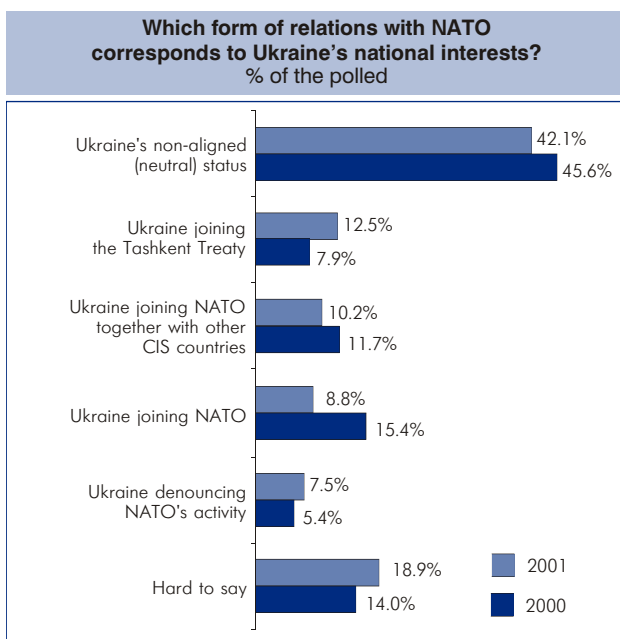
Conclusions

NATO, relying on U.S. potential, will play the lead role in maintaining regional security in Europe for the near future. The most rational position of Ukraine with respect to NATO entry might be formulated as maximum proximity in the absence of formal accession.

The Tashkent Treaty is only formally a military alliance. Possible accession to the Treaty will not strengthen Ukraine's security, but can lead to negative political consequences. Ukraine's accession to the Tashkent Treaty is inexpedient.

The process of NATO enlargement and transformation will proceed in parallel with EU enlargement and a gradual transfer of the separate tasks of conflict prevention and crisis management to EU security institutions. Those processes will gradually lead to the establishment of a new regional security system — “Co-operative Security System” that should be joined by Ukraine.

To ensure its security for the time being, Ukraine should, within the framework of its present non-aligned status, significantly enhance the effectiveness of economic and democratic reforms domestically, attain the formal status of a candidate for EU membership and develop the closest possible co-operation with the EU in the security domain. ■



⁵ For more details about the foreign policy priorities of Ukraine's population in the security domain see an article of the Razumkov Centre expert M.Pashkov “Problems of European Security: Positions of the Population of Ukraine”. — *National Security & Defence*, 2001, No.9, p.27-33, <http://www.uceps.com.ua>.

⁶ Ibid.